

Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;
The which if you with patient ears attend.

What here shall miss,
our toil shall strive to mend.

(Exit.)

ACT 1



SCENE I

Verona. A public place.

Enter Sampson and Gregory, armed with swords and
bucklers.

Sampson

Gregory, o' my word, we'll not carry coals.

Gregory

No, for then we should be colliers.

Sampson

I mean, an we be in choler, we'll draw.

Gregory

Ay, while you live, draw your neck out of the collar.

Sampson
I strike quickly, being moved.

Gregory
But thou art not quickly moved to strike.

Sampson
A dog of the house of Montague moves me.

Gregory
To move is to stir; and to be valiant is to stand;
therefore, if thou art moved, thou run'st away.

Sampson
A dog of that house shall move me to stand; I will
take the wall of any man or maid of Montague's.

Gregory
That shows thee a weak slave; for the weakest goes to
the wall.

Sampson
True; and therefore women, being the weaker ves-
sels, are ever thrust to the wall; — therefore, I will push
Montague's men from the wall, and thrust his maids to
the wall.

Gregory
The quarrel is between our masters, and us their men.

Sampson
'Tis all one, I will show myself a tyrant; when I have
fought with the men, I will be cruel with the maids, I will
cut off their heads.

Gregory
The heads of the maids?

Sampson
Ay, the heads of the maids, or their maidenheads;
take it in what sense thou wilt.

Gregory
They must take it in sense, that feel it.

Sampson
Me they shall feel, while I am able to stand: and 'tis
known I am a pretty piece of flesh.

Gregory
'Tis well thou art not fish; if thou hadst, thou hadst
been poor John. Draw thy tool; here comes two of the
house of the Montagues.

Sampson
My naked weapon is out: quarrel, I will back
thee.

Gregory
How! turn thy back and run?

Sampson
Fear me not.

Gregory
No, marry; I fear thee!

Sampson
Let us take the law of our side; let them begin.

Gregory

I will frown as I pass by, and let them take it as they list.

Sampson

Nay, as they dare. I will bite my thumb at them, which is a disgrace to them, if they bear it.

Enter Abram and Balthasar.

Abram

Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

Sampson

I do bite my thumb, sir.

Abram

Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

Sampson (*aside to Gregory*)

Is the law of our side, if I say ay?

Gregory (*aside to Sampson*)

No.

Sampson

No, sir, I do not bite my thumb at you, sir, but I bite my thumb, sir.

Gregory

Do you quarrel, sir?

Abram

Quarrel, sir! no, sir.

Sampson

If you do, sir, I am for you; I serve as good a man as you.

Abram

No better.

Sampson

Well, sir.

Gregory (*aside to Sampson*)

Say 'better'; here comes one of my master's kinsmen.

Sampson

Yes, better, sir.

Abram

You lie.

Sampson

Draw, if you be men. Gregory, remember thy swashing blow.

They fight.

Enter Benvolio.

Benvolio

Part, fools! put up your swords; you know not what you do. (*Beats down their swords.*)

Enter Tybalt.

Tybalt

What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds? Turn thee, Benvolio, look upon thy death.